



July 12, 2022 – Virtual Meeting

What is your favorite summer activity?



How do we want to have these conversations? What agreements should we make as a community?

be open and honest

What is missing from Independent Living (IL) Program Services? What can be improved upon?



Washington State Department of **CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

- Getting youth to engage with IL services from the beginning. More resistant to engage as they are leaving the system.
- Consistent referrals from DCYF are being missed. Famlink to generate referrals would be helpful. Feel like we are chasing social workers.
- It's important to be inclusive. Don't make assumptions about ability levels or levels of experience/exposure practicing skills.
- This is a life long partnership we need to start with EVERY youth as soon as they come into care. Not waiting until they are teens or at the 17.5 meeting.
- They know what they need, but they don't know who to ask. Lack of information, no effective way of communicating between IL providers and youth. Some kind of resources where the youth know who to ask.
- Train caregivers to practice Independent Living Services (ILS) in the home, how to cook, budget, etc. ILS starts with the caregiver.
- From a Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) perspective: We are missing a clear set of IL skills or exact topics. Simple things such as opening a bank account, getting car insurance, setting up a medical appointment etc. We need to go back to basics as opposed to expecting them to know these things.
- I think it is also hard when young people live in group homes for the majority of their lives and the group homes are restrictive to what freedoms they can have.
- Doing consistent trainings. Not just one and done trainings. Especially while young people grow and learn, their experience and wants will change.
- There is not enough funding. Often the person running the program doesn't have a manual. Whatever they bring with them is how they run that program. Need a balance between creativity and consistency. How can providers be accountable for what they are supposed to be teaching?
- Should be a listed point of contact for ILS that Caregivers/Youth can call for resources. This should be listed on the DCYF website.
- Ongoing conversations with youth as skills are learned over time.
- Go with youth do do tasks.
- ILS should focus in with case worker and caregiver.
- When you form partnerships, they should know that their job is to do things with youth, not just tell them what they need to do. That would be a huge programmatic shift. Most case managers aren't allowed to actually drive with the young people. That needs to change.
- There needs to be state funding for IL! Washington should invest and not rely solely on federal funding for this service.
- Dad how do I... YouTube.
- It appears that IL is siloed. It is always someone else's job. It should be a teamed approach.
- There used to be incentives for good caregivers.
- Young people coming out of JR are going to be low priority for housing resources because when you are incarcerated you are considered stably housed. That needs to change and would help to eliminate racial disproportionality in housing.
- A lot of youth don't have transportation, or don't have the right types of identification. Lots of case managers don't do these things hands on with young people. It should be in their job description.
- Can ILS work with Caregivers more?
- Knowing who the ILS provider(s) are, having contact information for, and providing awareness about ILS programs and clear pathways for youth to gain access to programs.
- Housing: clients, case managers, and social workers don't know how to access different programs/services that their clients are eligible for.
- Youth who have intellectual disabilities or come from very different backgrounds would also benefit from warm handoff/being shown how to do things (as opposed to just told).
- ILS workers checking in every 6 month.
- No reward for good IL case managers.
- How do youth feel safe with daily needs? How do we plan for plan A and plan E? How can caregivers get that training?
- Baby steps are so important. Break it down.



- I believe youth need access to housing that is independent from foster homes at age 18.
- Better communication with other service providers.
- Youth missing their documents.
- I have heard from youth that caregivers are too busy or don't want youth to participate - because caregiver doesn't have time to get youth to and from.
- I have been a fan of the ILP program. The challenge I have had is there is not consistency across programs and across the state. There are some skills that are universal and some that are specific to geographical area. What could we expect if they were taught and exposed to IL skills?
- Financial preparedness is key and getting money to do so.
- No good data collection. We do not receive data back, so we do not know the areas that need changed. We don't have the infrastructure to do this.
- The stress from being in that type of environment can affect your ability to process.
- You don't know who/what you don't know.
- In-house case management, little apartments, they have way more resources for our youth in extended foster care.
- Program is not supported by department. Lack of engagement then a rush to get things done.
- Lots of clients have low skills around IL. Instead of saying, "go get a bank account" they need someone who can walk them through that process (warm handoff). Partnerships with banks.
- Most kids don't want to engage with ILS.
- The more relevant it is at the time and the more it can be put into practice right away, the more valuable it will be. A skill needs to be done with the young person and done with some regularity (so they know the skill when they need it).
- Need an idea of expectations, number of youth in the county that should qualify for ILS.
- ILS presenting a roadmap.
- Smaller case loads for ILS.
- When driving kids we have to use county vehicles and young people don't want to ride in cars that say "King County" on the side.
- Some general standards or basic curriculum so that it is clear and understandable to all what participants will receive and providers are accountable for. Not to dampen creativity but to have some expectations across the state.
- There needs to be an "assessment" for a new client to determine where they are at with what they need. As opposed to jumping to where we think they are; if they say they need help locating housing but we fail to check in with them about whether they have an ID, Social Security Card, etc prior to that as opposed to jumping in and locating housing and then hitting that barrier and having to put the brakes on great progress due to small things that could have been rectified easily prior to that if we knew about it and took the time to ask about it.
- Retention of staff. Having long term staff would allow long term services to youth. Invest in our teams in a meaningful way, and youth would have long term support. Then you don't have to re-engage and rebuild rapport. When caseworker leaves, youth drop out of IL services.

What is missing from Transition Planning? What can be improved upon?

- Started earlier.
- May not always happen.
- Doesn't consistently happen, or IL is not invited. Youth want planning to start sooner.
- Inconsistency of expectations between social workers.
- Have realistic conversations.
- Lot of barriers to plan ahead. Young person cannot sign up for Extended Foster Care (EFC) until their 18 birthday. Also, cannot enroll in housing programs until their 18th birthday. Gap in services.
- Tool needs to be updated. Very restricted and not useful.
- Not all youth understand that these things need to be driven by them.
- Some youth don't know how to make appointments.
- Youth want people to teach them practical things: how to choose a college, how to apply for a job, resume, cover letter, financial literacy, financial aid, household skills, college major, how to handle pregnancy, etc.
- Start with those small questions that are every day.



- More conversations about vocational programs.
- EFC and ILS should be partnered.
- Anxiety & Mental Health can be a barrier.
- Having transition planning.
- Conversations do not get documented.
- Does not feel like a personalized tool. Most answers are IL will support you with that.
- No cookie cutter plans. Youth strengths, youth opportunities, youth challenges. Individualize.
- Build expectations that may not be realistic or achievable for all youth.
- In the 17.5 meeting, everyone hears that IL can do that. Question how to get EFC checks because they are not receiving it.
- If the kids were more stabilized by the time they turn 18 it would be easier to transition plan. We try to have high level conversations, when they are still trying to get their basic needs met.
- 17.5 meetings used to be more strength based and fun.
- Issues with barriers to vital documents. DCYF says they are working on it; however, this can be a long process.
- When I would refer someone to ILP, but found that at 15 they weren't in a space for it. They want something tangible or they won't respond to phone calls. I found I would have to re refer when they got to 17. How can we engage our clients to respond?
- 17.5 meetings used to be really celebratory. Often times we'd have them in the nice room at the 2100 building or in the community and the social worker would bring cupcakes - we'd talk about the growth we saw in the young person, not just do you know this, do you know that. It is very overwhelming and not fun at all. They zone out.
- Lots of information covered in a short amount of time. Too soon to youth turning 18. Overwhelming process and important topics that are being covered. More opportunities for transition planning the better.
- Heard that is has not felt realistic.
- More housing for 18-23-year olds.
- Transition planning would be so much easier if we actually had housing for kids under 18 (especially young people who are parents).
- Notebook for the youth to keep important documents. Would help with organization. The department has information the youth will need for adulthood and exit.
- As a provider, it would be helpful to be introduced to the client well before the 17.5 meeting. They are eligible for service at 15 years and 30 days into care. We should get them as soon as they are eligible.
- Caregivers being able to ask legitimate questions without shame. Specifically, foster parent/caregiver support without judgement. Regional consistency.
- Make 17.5 meetings more youth oriented.
- More training on how to complete a transition plan.
- Does not feel the tool has prioritization. Not youth centered.
- Budgeting: let them make it and ground it more realistically.
- Social worker saying they will not give out original documents, but these are needed for certain tasks, such as housing.
- Case management and assistance is voluntary and youth need to be engaged/opt in.
- Youth driven.
- Start earlier and be developmentally challenging.
- Rarely do we have 20.5 meetings like we have 17.5 meetings. I don't think DCYF has 20.5 meetings. I have never seen a 20.5 meeting.
- How can programs support transitions?
- Many times, things are done for the youth and not the youth.
- Need more consistency. Sometimes 15/16-year old's need a bit of chasing. I am in a rural area and it is opposite.
- Transition plan before 18, but also pre-aging out. Would be valuable to have formal planning and this to be consistent across the state.
- In stages.
- Caseworkers may not understand the importance of transition planning.



- All conversations with youth are about their transition and it's not only the 17.5 meeting.
- Knowledge base of caseworkers as they rely on IL providers to hold the information.
- It's overwhelming to have it happen all at once. Give stock answers but they don't really know or have the steps.
- Give more time for transitioning from youth to adulthood. Starting way before 17. Starting at least at 14!
- Youth are not always responsive.
- Great way for IL to reestablish their role.
- Redundant work trying to obtain multiple documents for youth.

What is missing from Financial Capability & Preparedness? What can be improved upon?

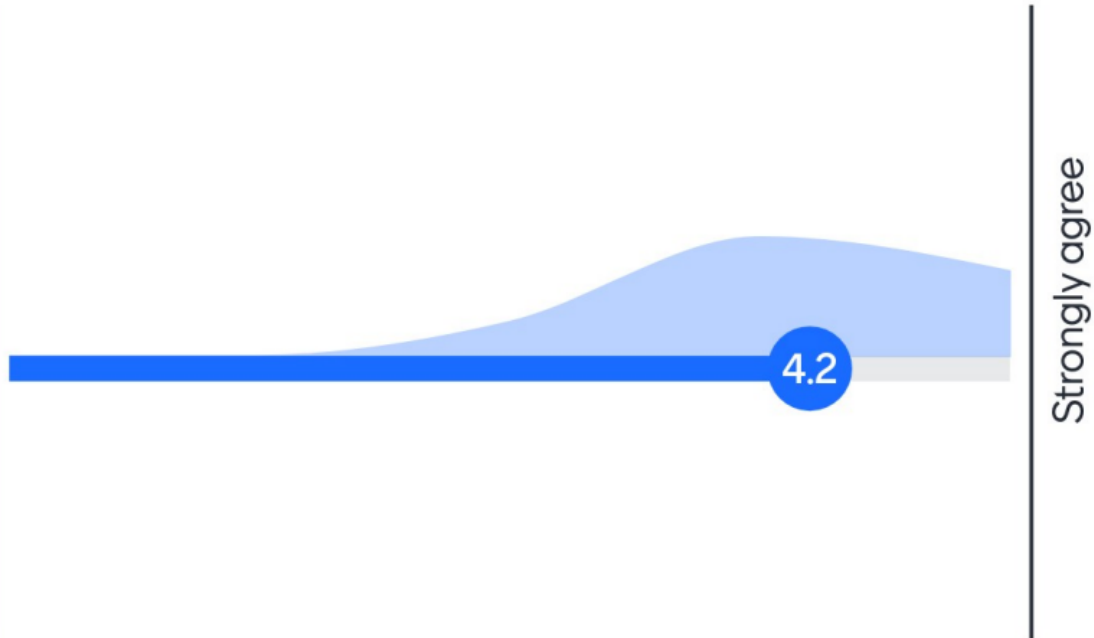
- Starting financial literacy training earlier in the process.
- Giving proper access to young people to practice financial literacy skills.
- Don't keep Social Security card with wallet, teach youth.
- A standardized curriculum for all providers in youth's life (DCYF, IL providers, and caregivers) to utilize and reinforce with youth.
- Learning these skills can't just be learned in a training. Learning and applying it over multiple years does.
- Youth need to have money in order to know the importance of money.
- New tools to track money in place of a check book.
- Making young people aware of scams and what red flags to look for.
- IL is a supplemental program. Everything we teach should be reinforced where the young person is living.
- Application online computer literacy, versus resume. How to interview. How to dress professionally.
- Appoint a person who shares the resources needed for a young person's "plan". Such as college (Passport, etc).
- Assigning an appointed person to help this person with those skills.
- Some homes are restrictive of younger youths' financial abilities. Lack of access to bank accounts, etc.
- Should be taught in the schools.
- Tree House has been known to counteract what we are trying to do.
- How foster parents give allowance. How to budget. Good debt versus bad debt. Alliance Training for caregivers?
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA).
- One thing we talked about when working on crafting the financial capability bill was the opportunity to manage money, and even make mistakes. That's where the allowance idea came in.
- Homes where youth live to be reinforcing these skills.
- Hard when there are multiple agencies providing financial supports, when this is not being communicated to other agencies. Need to work with youth on how to manage finances moving forward.
- Not taught how to pick employment-based benefits like medical, retirement, etc.
- IL to be part of teaching skills, but not the only one teaching skills.

Mentimeter

Overall, I felt today's meeting was productive and a good use of my time.



Strongly disagree



Strongly agree

How are you feeling leaving today's co-design session?

appreciate the process
looking forward to change
appreciated
thankful
hopeful
interesting
productive
thankful for facilitation